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No. 306.

The Woman's Convention, Punkville, U. S. A.

An Inconsistent Brochure of Fun and Folly in One Act

BY

EUDORA HOLLINSHEAD SLOCUMB

EDITED BY MARION SHORT

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PRICE 25 CENTS

NEW YORK
SAMUEL FRENCH
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28-30 WEST 38TH STREET

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SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.
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THE WOMAN'S CONVENTION

TIME:—NOW.

PLACE:—Punkville, U. S. A.

SCENE:—*A Convention Hall decorated with bunting, flags, mottoes and banners. At* L. *a speaker's stand behind which the President and Secretary sit. Seats, preferably camp-chairs, face the speaker's stand, leaving a cleared space in front of it. There should be an aisle left free for entrances and exits at* R. *Also there should be a door at* L. *Near stand and facing the same way, chairs should be occupied by the minister, the Mayor's representative,* MRS. HONORARIUM *and* MRS. LIVERPOOL-LONDON, *while the chairs at* R. *are taken by the remaining members of the convention.*

©CLD 40949
JUN 16 1915

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MRS. WOBBLY. *President of the Punkville Feminist Club*

MRS. LOPPY. *Secretary of the Punkville Feminist Club*

MISS TAGGETT.....*Mayor's Representative*

MRS. PRY. *Editor The Woman's Political Prognosticator*

MRS. SPARKS. *Chairman of the New City Charter Committee*

MISS PRIM..*Usher of the Punkville Feminist Club*

THE REVEREND MISS SPLURGE..*Who aspires to the chaplaincy of The Punkville Feminist Club*

MRS. LIVERPOOL LONDON *A Suffragist from abroad*

MRS. HONORARIUM.....*A visitor from New York*

MRS. JONES.....*Mother of the Jones children*

JENNIE.....*Elder of the two* JONES *children*

MRS. STRONGMIND.....*Positively for Suffrage*

MRS. WAYBACK.....*Positively against Votes for Women*

BRIDGET MALONEY..*An investigating local visitor*

MRS. HANSWEISER.....*A disgusted local visitor*

MRS. VAN PROPER.....*A Club Member*

MRS. GOSSIP.....*A Club Member*

MRS. GADSBY.....*Chairman of the Indiscretions Committee*

MRS. GREENE.....*A fond-mother Club Member*

SUSIE GREEN.....*Who is* MRS. GREEN'S *youngest*

MRS. PAOLO SIMPLEANNA.....*A protesting visitor*

MRS. VOCAL..*President of the Pink Cat Club of Loudville*

Other Club Members and Members of the Pink Cat Club.

SUGGESTIONS.

During the proceedings of the convention, the ladies present pass powder puffs to each other, cast surreptitious glances into hand-mirrors, straighten their hair and arrange their hats as occasion offers. These bits of business are indulged in mainly as one speaker retires and another comes forward as of course attention must not be distracted from the one holding the floor.

Local hits and fresh news items may be made use of by speakers whenever same would add to the humor of their lines.

The Club Members are, in the main, dressed fashionably as are also the visitors. Miss Splurge may wear a cap and gown and indulge in crochet work during the proceedings. Bridget Maloney should show a preference for bright colors in her attire, especially green. Mrs. Hansweiser should be scrupulously neat and approximate the German peasant-girl in her attire. Mrs. Simpleanna should, of course, suggest her Italian origin by means of bright colors, large ear-rings, hair parted and drawn over her ears, etc.

Miss Prim passes peppermints and gum on small tray to each speaker at the conclusion of her efforts.

Bridget Maloney sustains most of the humor of the piece and her part should be taken by a woman capable of strong character delineation.

NOTE:—When there are so many parts to be taken it is very essential in an amateur performance to have an expert prompter among those seated on stage to avoid danger of painful pauses.

The Woman's Convention

DISCOVERED:—*The convention assembled and seated. There is a buzz of animated conversation which the President interrupts by sharp raps of the gavel.*

PRESIDENT. (MRS. WOBBLY) The meeting will please come to order. (*Silence*)

MRS. GOSSIP. (*Spitefully. Finishing a sentence to her neighbor*)—seems to *forget* that he's a married man, and if he—oh! (*Claps hand over mouth as she realizes she is being heard by everyone*)

PRESIDENT. I'm just so nervous, ladies, that I don't know whether I'll conduct this convention right or not——

ENCOURAGING CRIES FROM AUDIENCE. You will! You will!

PRESIDENT. I was elected while Willie had the measles and I didn't know it until I got here to-day, and I was never president of anything before, so I've asked the Secretary to prompt me what to do and—please—everybody prompt me, for I don't know a thing about Parliamentary Law. I might have studied it during Willie's measles if some one had given me the hint. Well, I'll just do the best I can. Of course I know I have to pound with the gavel and cry order at stated intervals, but just how far apart the intervals should be I haven't the slightest idea. I have been asked to state for the benefit of visitors that we meet here on a platform

of equality, each and everyone having a right to express her mind whether for universal suffrage or against it. (*Turns to* SECRETARY) What was it you told me I ought to do next?

MISS LOPPY. Ask me to read the minutes of our last meeting.

PRESIDENT. (*Nervously*) Well, if you know that comes next why should you wait for me to ask you? Proceed, please.

MISS LOPPY. (*Reads from a note-book in her hand*) The last meeting of the Punkville Feminist Club was held in Mrs. Gossip's dining-room, because the parlor was being papered, and Mr. Gossip wanted the sitting-room all to himself to read his paper in.

MRS. STRONGMIND. (*Springs up*) Down with husbands!

MRS. GOSSIP. (*Springs up also*) Not with mine! He can sit in the sitting-room just as long as he thinks the situation demands it! Just because your husband hasn't courage enough to open his head——

MRS. STRONGMIND. (*Interrupts*) He HAS the courage to open his head. (*His head is open this instant*) He's at the dentist's having a bicuspid molar drawn.

PRESIDENT. (*Pounds gavel*) Order! Order! (MRS. GOSSIP *and* MRS. STRONGMIND *glare at each other, then resume their seats*) Please proceed, Miss Loppy.

MISS LOPPY. In just a second, Mrs. President, but I want to ask a question first while I think of it. Mrs. Greene, where did you say you saw that reduced pearl-colored crepe de chine?

MRS. VAN PROPER. (*Rises*) Mrs. President, I protest. The Secretary is out of order.

MISS LOPPY. (*Angered*) You're out of order yourself, Mrs. Van Proper, and I'll get that crepe de chine if I want it!

MRS. VAN PROPER. Just because my niece has a pearl colored gown, you're going to try to imitate it!

MISS LOPPY. Your niece is so insignificant, Mrs. Van Proper, that I'd forgotten her very existence. She should dress in bright red if you want her noticed at all, which the poor girl isn't now.

MISS MALONEY. (*Jumps up delightedly*) Go to it! Av there's anything that warms me blood it's a scrap!

MISS LOPPY. Where did you say, Mrs. Greene?

MRS. GREENE. Catty cornered from the library on Eighth and Main—that new store—the Friedlanders.

MRS. VAN PROPER. Sorry to disappoint Miss Loppy, but Mr. Friedlander gave me an option on the rest of the bolt.

MRS. SPARKS. (*Jumps up with loud protest*) Well, I'll bolt this convention if order isn't soon restored.

PRESIDENT. Oh, I forgot! (*Pounds with gavel*) Order! Order! Or Mrs. Sparks will bolt! (MRS. VAN PROPER *and* MRS. SPARKS *resume their seats.* BRIDGET *looks interestedly from one to the other, then sits down also*) What would Parliamentary Law do in case of such confusion, I wonder?

MISS MALONEY. (*Hops up. Eagerly*) Sind the scrappers to jail! Shall I call the police?

PRESIDENT. Sit down, please. (BRIDGET *does so, mumbling a complaint*) Proceed, Miss Loppy.

MISS LOPPY. (*Softly but firmly*) Friedlander's is not the only store containing pearl colored crepe de chine. (*Reads*) At our last suffrage meeting it was proposed by a speaker from the City Council to build a dam over the body of water most convenient to the city, raising it to wash the town clean, after which alfalfa and weeping willows may be planted as suggested.

MRS. VAN PROPER. (*Sotto voce, for the benefit*

of MISS LOPPY) There are crepe de chines AND crepe de chines.

MISS LOPPY. Which I'll prove when I buy mine.

MRS. VAN PROPER *and* MISS LOPPY. (*In chorus*) Such presumption! Such selfishness! I never heard of such a thing! etc. (*They keep on glaring at each other and exclaiming until* PRESIDENT *stops them*) PRESIDENT. Ladies, ORDER! (*The gavel hits her left hand a glancing blow as she brings it down on table*) Ouch! I struck my finger.

MISS MALONEY. Then your finger's out of order!

MRS. VAN PROPER. (*Rises*) Mrs. President, I wish to call your attention to an error in the Secretary's report. She pronounced suffrage like suffering.

MISS LOPPY. (*Softly, with her eyes on her report*) If some people are growing so deaf that they imagine suffering is said instead of suffrage, I would suggest a nice, black enamelled trumpet.

MISS MALONEY. Suffering Moses! Any suffragist that ain't suffering herself is trying to make some one else suffer, so what's the odds?

PRESIDENT. Miss Maloney, you are holding the floor too much!

MISS MALONEY. (*Tone of martyrdom*) That's right—make me the goat whin thim two's doin' the fussin'.

PRESIDENT. Proceed, Miss Secretary.

MISS LOPPY. (*Reads*) Mrs. Gadsby made the suggestion that a petition be framed imploring that at future suffrage conventions in Washington—(*Stops and spells*) What is that word? T-o-n-g-u-e—oh, yes! Tungsten burners be used along the approach to the White House so that Suffragists will not stumble on their way in, and can see where to land when they fall out. The motion was unanimously carried.

MRS. STRONGMIND. (*Rises*) Mrs. President, I do not see why the Secretary has omitted to note

my motion petitioning the car companies to give the big, roomy smoker to the women for a dressing-room, and turn over to the men the tiny apartment where one hangs the baby up on a peg while combing Minnie's hair, washing Bobbie's ears, powdering one's nose, and buttoning one's shoes. I will add now that it wouldn't hurt the men to be obliged to stand in layers while they smoked, and two of them could stand in a wash-basin, while we attired ourselves in comfort in the smoker.

MISS LOPPY. I made a minute of the motion, Mrs. Strongmind, but I omitted reading it aloud because I have understood that some of our visiting speakers are rather long winded, and I want to get home in time for dinner. (*Reads again*) Mrs. Sparks spoke on Man's Relation To The Universe as an Atom, and her deduction of the missing rib as indicating man's tendency toward spinelessness was well received. Mrs. Harry Gettum's motion to adjourn was accepted, the next meeting to be combined with the convention of the present date.

Respectfully,
LILLIAN LOPPY,
Secretary of the Punkville Feminist Club.

MISS SPLURGE. (*Rises as* SECRETARY *sits*) Mrs. President, I move that if there are no objections to the Secretary's report——

MRS. JONES. (*Springs up*) I do object. I can't make out what that dam project means.

PRESIDENT. (*Horrified*) Order, Mrs. Jones! Such language, and you the mother of two!

MRS. JONES. (*Bewildered*) What did I say?

PRESIDENT. I never use profanity, so I can't repeat it.

MRS. JONES. But you don't understand! I meant——

PRESIDENT. You may tell your Pastor what you meant, not me!

MISS MALONEY. (*Delighted. Springs up*) Hit 'em again, Maginnis!

(*The* JONES *children begin to cry.*)

PRESIDENT. (*Addressing* MRS. JONES) And you should have left your children at home with their father, Mrs. Jones. (*The* JONES *children cry louder than ever*) Yes, it's his sphere to look after them when you attend our meetings, where they should neither be seen nor heard.

MRS. JONES. (*Warning the children to silence*) But he had to look after business.

PRESIDENT. Business should be sacrificed to civic responsibilities.

MISS MALONEY. I don't know what the word manes, but if anyone called a child of mine a "civic responsibility," I'd—(*Raises clenched fists above her head*)

MISS SPLURGE. (*Sternly*) Miss Maloney! (*Turns to* PRESIDENT) Mrs. President, I rise to a point of order.

MISS MALONEY. (*To* MISS SPURGE) I rise to a pint of me elbows, if you or anyone else tries to crowd me out of taking me part in this occasion.

PRESIDENT. You really should not make irrelevant remarks, Miss Maloney. Dear me, where are we at?

MISS MALONEY. At the corner of Ninth and Main Street. I thought everyone knew that.

PRESIDENT. (*Helplessly, turning to* MISS LOPPY) Now what do I do next?

PRESIDENT. (*Helplessly, turning to* MISS LOPPY) Now what do I do next?

MISS LOPPY. You ask if the minutes stand approved.

PRESIDENT. All who approve of its being twenty minutes past three, say so.

OMNES. (*Correcting her*) Not those minutes

—minutes of the meeting! Not clock minutes! Mercy, no! etc.

PRESIDENTS. (*As hubub subsides, shows she is much offended*) Well, if anyone wants to sit up here and be found fault with and pound their fingers to pieces in my place, they're welcome to do so. Of course the minutes stand approved! What have the poor old minutes done that they shouldn't be?

MISS SPLURGE. (*Rises*) Mrs. President, may I have the floor?

PRESIDENT. (*Still pouting*) Yes, and my desk too if you want it, I don't care!

MISS SPLURGE. As I face this intelligent audience, I hardly know what to say.

MISS MALONEY. Arrah, thin what makes you say it?

PRESIDENT. (*Brings down gavel*) O-O-Order!

MISS SPLURGE. We must not descend to personalities, Miss Maloney, we should all feel the solemnity of this occasion. We must remember that humanity has reached an epoch, and that we all epochians.

MISS MALONEY. I'm not. I'm a Milwaukeean since I came from Ireland, and I immigrated later to this mudhole of a town we live in.

MISS SPLURGE. (*Throwing up her hands in horror*) Mudhole! Our beautiful Punkville, a mudhole.

(OMNES *murmur indignant comments.*)

PRESIDENT. Order! Order! (*Drops gavel and rubs wrist*) And I am getting a crick in the wrist. (*Calls loudly without using gavel*) Order!

MISS MALONEY. "Order?" That's just what I say. Clane the mudhole up. I'll head the scrubbing-brush brigade meself.

PRESIDENT. (*Almost crying*) Order, Miss Maloney!

MISS SPLURGE. (*Who has remained standing since her last speech. Condescendingly*) We must all try to be patient with this good girl.

MISS MALONEY. (*Indignantly*) Good? If I'm good, I'm not needing you to be patient.

MISS SPLURGE. (*Ignoring interruption*) Members and visiting strangers, there are a thousand little things running through my head——

MISS MALONEY. (*Interrupting*) Use petroleum! That's what Mrs. McDougal uses for the thousand little things running through her little Jimmie's head, and it's driving thim all away.

MISS SPLURGE. (*Continues to ignore* MISS MALONEY. We women must no longer grope for man's heart by way of his stomach, but demand it through the ballot-box.

MISS MALONEY. With that sour face of yours, you'll never get a man's heart, nayther by the ballot-box, nor a box on the ear. Change your face is your only hope.

MISS SPLURGE. Mrs. President, I object to insulting remarks.

MISS MALONEY. What's the use being free and equal if you can't say what you like?

MISS SPLURGE. I would suggest, Mrs. President, that an Orthodox representative, such as myself, be present to lend dignity to all future meetings of this Society at so much per annum, and with authority to remove members of the audience who indulge in objectionable comments.

MISS MALONEY. Any one that iver trys to remove a free and equal citizen like me——

PRESIDENT. (*Pounding alternately with gavel and ice pitcher*) Order! Dear me, we must try to get somewhere. (SECRETARY *lays a note on the* PRESIDENT'S *desk.* PRESIDENT *reads note aloud*) "The Mayor of Punkville being indisposed, the Honorable Miss Taggett will speak in her place.

MISS TAGGETT. (*Rises*) Mrs. President, fellow

citizens and visitors. It is with great pleasure that I greet you. The Mayor regrets that the extreme youth of her twin babies renders her presence at home quite imperative. But she wishes to extend the welcome of Punkville to you all, and to assure you with this key (*Extends a key a foot long*) the freedom of the City until the curfew bell sounds at nine P. M. After that, no one but female policeman patrol the streets, and all lights are out. Any man caught loitering will be compelled to listen to a suffrage speech an hour long. The Mayor hopes you will visit our beautiful tea-room, and that our censored theatre will assist in entertaining you. Only dramatized missionary tracts are performed, and the actors are all mature maiden ladies of accentuated respectability who will send you home to your various hearth-stones as pure as when you emerged therefrom. I respectfully retire, and give you the privileges of the convention. (*Seats herself*)

(MRS. PRY *stands for recognition.*)

PRESIDENT. (*Nods recognition*) Mrs. Pry.

MRS. PRY. (*Quivering with indignation*) I have written an editorial for my paper in regard to that very thing.

PRESIDENT. To what thing do you refer, Mrs. Pry?

MRS. PRY. The Mayor's twins. Considering that we expected out-of-town visitors, twins were both ill advised and reprehensible. I have not heard that the Mayor has offered any excuse. At least she should have had the grace to apologize.

PRESIDENT. (*To* MRS. PRY) Why do you look at me like that? The twins weren't mine.

MRS. PRY. I move, Mrs. President, that we overlook the offense of our Mayor with the understand-

ing that said offense is not to be repeated. Do I have a second?

MISS MALONEY. You've niver even had a first of your own. That's why you're sore on the twins.

MRS. STRONGMIND. (*Rises*) I second your motion, Mrs. Pry.

PRESIDENT. All in favor, say I.

CHORUS OF VOICES. I!

MISS MALONEY. No! The more twins in circulation, the better!

PRESIDENT. (*Ignoring her*) It's unanimous. (SECRETARY *puts another slip of paper before* PRESIDENT. PRESIDENT *reads slip aloud*) "We have with us to-day, an eminent citizen from abroad, the Honorable Mrs. Liverpool-London." (*Noisy applause as* MRS. LIVERPOOL-LONDON *rises*)

MRS. LIVERPOOL-LONDON. It is with diffidence and a bad cold that I approach the subject dear to all our hearts—Universal Suffrage. Your confreres in New York gave me such a chilly reception when I landed, that I've had irritation of the tonsils and temper ever since. So my remarks will be brief but fervid.

That women should cast an acquisitive eye on the two P's—Parliament and Property—is considered an unpardonable effrontery by the average Englishman. He thinks she should confine herself to the two P's—piety and propriety. To these he considers she has an inalienable right, and he does not care to use said rights for himself. She can have dear old piety and tiresome old propriety all to herself as far as he is concerned. In his estimation man is a thinking and woman a thoughtless machine, but we all know that the true woman has the brains of a hen and rooster combined.

You all know of the reputed surgical operation required to get anything through an Englishman's head. When a woman happens to be the operator, it takes an ax for the instrument, followed up by a

charge of dynamite, and then half the time she makes only a slight abrasion on the surface of his skull. Therefore suffrage progresses slowly in England, but we hope in the next generation to discover a high explosive to open up the brains of our masculine contingent, and then we shall establish forever the new propaganda of equal rights for all. If necessary, we can even feed the men through a hose, which should certainly give them food for reflection. In the ante-room I have a few militant-suffragette bricks which I will dispose of, at cut rates, and to the gracious hostess who shall think to invite me to dinner, I will present a brick free of charge. I thank you for your kind attention. (*Sits amid generous applause*)

PRESIDENT. (*Consulting slip of paper furnished by* SECRETARY) "Mrs. Strongmind will now deliver an original poem."

MRS. STRONGMIND. (*Rises, and reads with deep voice and much fervor*)

Oh, Great Intelligence give us a hunk!
Assist us all to show the proper spunk.

We do not ask for rude and bloody war,
For strong to battle with our tongues we are.

MISS MALONEY. (*Sotto voce*) Especially yourself, so say the neighbors!

MRS. STRONGMIND.

With pockets in our coats, and two-legged skirts,
We'll use our husband's patterns for our shirts.

We'll let our men folks do the kitchen fire-ens
And whet their ploughshares into curling-irons.

Attention males! We'll train you in the way
That we have meekly walked this many a day.

MISS MALONEY. (*In hoarse whisper across to* MRS. LIVERPOOL-LONDON) Will you lend me a brick for a moment? She makes me tired!

(MRS. LIVERPOOL-LONDON *ignores her, also* MRS. STRONGMIND.)

MRS. STRONGMIND. (*Continues*)

Our powder-puffs we'll make from suffrage flags,
For our progressive movement never lags.

We'll demonstrate our freedom from the thrall
Of baking bread, and making beds and all

The things like that expected of a wife——
And unpaid servant all her life!

MISS MALONEY. (*Wearily*) What's comin' next on the programme?

MRS. STRONGMIND.

We'll carry latch-keys of our own, my friend.
No telling to what heights we'll yet ascend.

MISS MALONEY. Whin you git to the top—fall off!

(MRS. STRONGMIND *seats herself amid applause.*)

MISS PRIM. (*Rushes forward from her seat near door* R.) Mrs. President!

PRESIDENT. Miss Prim!

MISS PRIM. Mrs. Van Proper's husband wants to know what to do when the baby eats the matches?

MISS MALONEY. Call the fire department to extinguish him.

PRESIDENT. Order!

MRS. VAN PROPER. (*Springs up hysterically*) Oh, heavens! Has the baby eaten matches?

MISS PRIM. Mr. Van Proper said he hadn't, but looked as if he contemplated doing so. He wanted to be on the safe side.

MRS. VAN PROPER. Oh, I'm glad he didn't eat the matches!

MISS MALONEY. Matches are expensive. The auld Scratch has raised the price on brimstone.

MRS. VAN PROPER. Mrs. President, I think my husband is really hinting that he'd like to come in to the meeting.

PRESIDENT. You may tell him our programme is too heavy for one of his sex. He could neither comprehend nor enjoy it. To-morrow we shall have light, breezy exercises he may be able to appreciate. The hall will be decorated with cut flowers, daisies and baby-blue ribbons, also as a concession to incorrigibly depraved masculinity, a few ash-trays will be provided and passed around with the gum-drops. You may be excused long enough to inform your husband of our decision, providing you do not kiss him on the door-step.

MRS. VAN PROPER. Thank you. I'll not go within kissing distance. (*Exits, and presently returns quietly to seat*)

PRESIDENT. (*As* MRS. VAN PROPER *exits. Reads from slip*) "We have with us to-day two speakers on the question 'Should women obey the law?' Mrs. Honorarium of New York takes the negative, and we will first hear from Mrs. Honorarium."

MRS. HONORARIUM. (*She is a very large woman.* MISS PRIM *places a soap box for her on which is conspicuously written "Fairy Soap." She mounts the box carefully, raises her lorgnette and surveys the audience with an air of great dignity and pride*) I hope you feel the honor of sitting at my feet. I have brought them from a great listence on purpose. I give you my gracious permission to quaff

at the Fount of knowledge I shall set spurting for your benefit. I would suggest that after my lecture, you give me a vote of thanks and retire to your homes to meditate upon the great thoughts I shall cast hitherward and thitherward.

MISS MALONEY. (*To her neighbor*) Glad it's thoughts she's a casting, instead of bricks.

MRS. HONORARIUM. Should woman obey the law? Most certainly not. She is allowed no voice in making the law, why should she be accountable for its provisions. Like the income tax, as applied to women, it is infliction without compensation. Woman is not considered competent enough to pass upon the question of Capital Punishment. She is not eligible to execute, but is perfectly eligible to execution. The law says to her: "You are convicted by a Jury of your Peers." Her Peers are often the gentlemen who have been hanging around the corner-saloon looking for a jury job. The loafer fresh from Jim Clancy's Gin-Palace, casts the ballot that decides the moral young school-mam's salary, and even defines her marrying privileges. The business-girls going to and fro, mornings and evenings, are producers who are both unrepresented and misrepresented. The mother who gives to the world a son, has no voice in the making of laws to protect that son. Woman's relation to the law is a joke, but it is such a worn out joke, that I can't laugh at it any more. Hence my solemnity. Hoping my weighty remarks will not give you mental indigestion, I bring them to a close. (*Takes her seat, amid loud applause*)

(MISS MALONEY *pulls a large bunch of flowers off her hat and throws them in* MRS. HONORARIUM'S *direction.*)

MRS. GOSSIP. (*Springs up*) Mrs. President, may I indulge in a few extempore remarks?

PRESIDENT. You may.

MRS. GOSSIP. Then let me say that in my opinion, a woman should obey the law, because nine times out of ten she gets the better of it anyhow. Just let her be pretty, and have a jury, and she can kill off all the husbands necessary and still be acquitted and go scott free. Wise men all know that woman is the other half, not merely one third, or a rib, no matter how the law treats her; and even admitting that she is the rib, have you never heard the story of the tail that wagged the dog? That's the case all over this neighborhood! Even if they do cut the feathers off our hats, censure our hatpins, banish open-work stockings and the peek-a-boo waist, fearing the effect on the strong guardians of Public Administration, they know that in time we are bound to break out in some new and delightful indiscretion, and they'd miss it awfully if we didn't. Every wife knows that if she doesn't develop a fascinating giddy streak in herself, for her husband to censor, he will wander around looking for it in some other woman. We should obey the law, I say, because even while we obey it, we rise superior to it, and have things our own way anyhow. (*Seats herself. Amid moderate applause*)

PRESIDENT. (*Consulting slip* SECRETARY *places before her*) "We will now hear from Mrs. Wayback on the affirmative side of 'Shall women obey the law?'"

MRS. WAYBACK. (*Rises. Her manner is excessively feminine*) I don't like Mrs. Gossip's anarchistic remarks, and I don't approve of Mrs. Honorarium's either, even if she does come from New York. I think we should all obey the law, and shouldn't want to have things our own way, either directly or by beating around the bush. My husband thinks for me, and guides my trembling footsteps. And if he didn't, I could find plenty

of other men who would. I still look a good deal younger than my age, they tell me. I intend to stay placed in my sheltered nook, and remain always a perfect lady. I know the law here in Punkville says a school-teacher shouldn't get married. Well, who wants to marry a school-teacher anyhow? It's a woman's duty to obey her husband as the Bible says if she expects to go to heaven when she dies. And I don't think it's delicate to refer to men's ribs. Anatomical references should be confined to medical books. I don't think it's right for woman to slide off the pedestal where man has placed her, double-crossing a brand new ballot and putting it in the box just like a man. It will change her whole character. Her face will coarsen, her head grow bald, and she will sprout chin whiskers as a final awful punishment! Oh, ladies! I implore you, stick your toes in the cracks of that old warped pedestal and climb back to where the men can worship us in peace! The one thing important in life is to always remain a perfect lady, and have no opinions. That is my opinion! (*Sits. Faint applause from one or two*)

PRESIDENT. (*To* MISS LOPPY) Well, what do I do now?

MISS LOPPY. State whether the discussion is still open.

PRESIDENT. The discussion is still open.

(*Enter* MRS. HANSWEISER, *carrying a filled market basket.*)

MISS MALONEY. If the discussion ain't open, the door is. Look at what blew in!

MRS. HANSWEISER. (*Looks from* PRESIDENT *to audience and back again as she talks*) I am from Sout Punkville!

PRESIDENT. Well, I have no objection, I'm sure. Whom have we the pleasure of meeting?

MRS. HANSWEISER. I am a stranger vat you never met mit yourself already yet. My name is Wilhelmina Hansweiser. I come to tell you to meddle yourself mit your own beezness, and not mit my husband's brewery where he works. You vimmens should make yourselves busy mit poodle-dogs, und cats, and dancing, und tings vat you undershtands mit your brains, und let de men and de breweries alone! You go to try already to shut off de beer from de working-man, und you ask for de men to give you de vote to vote him no beer, und he gives it to you NOT! Und you take my advices und sit home mid yourselves, und buy you knitting needles, und socks knit, und de brewery—forget it! I come here to expressions my feelings, und now I go back home mit satisfactions und a basket of cabbage. Here me vat I say in conclusions. If Sout Punkville vants a brewery for de mens, all de vimen in de vorld can't shut off de beer, nor me vot I vants to say!

MISS MALONEY. I'll shut you off by me lone self. (*Takes* MRS. HANSWEISER *by the arm and drags her to door as she talks*) Sure it's your brewery that takes away me brother Moike's wages from his family on Saturday nights, und if you holler 'til you're black in the face, out you goes to the tune of Tipperary, or me name ain't Bridget Maloney!

MRS. HANSWEISER. (*As she struggles with* MISS MALONEY) Nein! Nein!

MISS MALONEY. Tin! Twelve! Out you go! (*Exits behind* MRS. HANSWEISER, *pushing her out.*)

PRESIDENT. (*Somewhat confused*) Ladies and gentlemen! I mean—gentlemanly ladies—ladies, I mean! I very much regret this upheaval from the brewery. Mrs. Sparks, will you please present as soon as possible the report of the committee on the

New Charter, which Miss Loppy informs me is next in order.

MRS. SPARKS. (*Rises*) Mrs. President! Fellow citizens! Visitors! After great deliberation, we are prepared to submit the following provisions. (*Occasionally consults a note-book in her hand as she speaks*)

FIRST—It is proposed to erect a water-fountain every now and then, cups furnished free of charge, trading-stamps given with every cup—in order to distract the attention of the male population from the saloons across the way.

SECOND—It is proposed that instead of an ornamental male mayor, in case a man is nominated for the next election, we hire a guaranteed cowboy to lasso a real business man, all wool and a yard wide, to run Punkville affairs on a business basis, and to use the money thus saved in advertising Punkville.

THIRD—To consider ways and means for using the ashes piling up in our alleys. It is suggested that they might be combined with sackcloth and presented to our lately retired politicians.

FOURTH—Suggested: That we do away with the phoney girls at Central and instal wooden pegs in their place. Wooden pegs are just as effective as wooden heads, and don't cost as much, as they take less wood.

FIFTH—It is proposed that we remove the emigrant wagon from our street railways, and substitute a method that will get the business man down town in time to 'phone his wife that business prevents his coming home to dinner.

SIXTH—It is proposed that automobiles be required to stop at each crossing, while the chauffeur rises to his feet and tells the pedestrians whether he intends to turn or go straight ahead, and also indulge in apologies, or swear words, or whatever

the occasion requires, as he names the make of his car.

SEVENTH—It is proposed that every pedestrian carry an alarm-clock to warn the automobiles that he is coming.

EIGHTH—It is suggested that the street cars furnish safety-belts hanging from the roof of the car into which the standee can insert himself and hang suspended, thus saving his corns and those of others in the rush hours when the car makes a lurch to leeward.

NINTH—It is proposed that the bill-boards of the city be given a heavy coat of whitewash—whitewash always on hand at City Hall when questions are asked after a burlesque show has left the town. That is all, Mrs. President. (*Seats herself amid applause*)

PRESIDENT. The Secretary will please make a note of the suggestions of the New Charter Committee.

MRS. JONES. (*Rises*) Mrs. President.

PRESIDENT. Mrs. Jones?

MRS. JONES. As you know, there has been some talk of putting a tariff on bananas. Mrs. Paolo Simpleanna is here to put in a plea for the succulent fruit.

MRS. SIMPLEANNA. (*She carries a basket of bananas. Speaks in very emotional manner*)

If they puta a tax upon banan,
It is de richa mana's plan
To do upa his Dago cousin——
Charge him too many centa de dozen.
Americano has his nicea watermelon,
De Frenchman for froga leg is yellin',
De German wanta hees pot of beer——
For us—de banan we lova dear!
We bakea heem and boila heem and fry heem,
And he slipa down and tasta like more!

If you puta heem in icea cream and try heem,
You too de banan will adore!
If you slidea on a peel on de stair,
Where you land you don't a mucha care!
Den taxa heem not—de banan!
For he feeda de reech and de poor!
He grow from de childa queeck to man!
So let heem come free—I implore!
(*Sits. Applause*)

PRESIDENT. The Secretary will please——

MISS MALONEY. (*Bounces in at door* R. *and interrupts*) Mrs. Prisident how much is it to become an active mimber of this association?

MISS LOPPY. (*Prompted by* PRESIDENT) Five dollars.

MISS MALONEY. (*Puts a bunch of bills on* PRESIDENT'S *desk*) She said I had no right to put her out. Now I've the right to go out there and put her out again if I want to. Sure she had a beerstein in her basket and hit me on the head wid it until I saw stars in the Irish hivens!

PRESIDENT. The Secretary will make a note of your application.

MISS MALONEY. (*Speaks, then seats herself*) Five dollars' worth of active mimbership—that's what I want! (*Rubs her head ruefully and straightens hat which was almost off*)

MRS. GADSBY. (*Rises*) Mrs. President.

PRESIDENT. Mrs. Gadsby?

MRS. GADSBY. As chairman of the Indiscretions Committee, I wish to report our investigation of The Old Ladies' Home. Mrs. Angy Cooper, seventy-six, and Miss Jane Snodgrass, seventy-two, had been accused of being out at night unchaperoned to celebrate Mrs. Cooper's birthday. After sharp interrogation they finally confessed that they went secretly to the corner of Broadway and Washington Avenue to look in at the window of Klein's Millinery Shop, and that after Angy had selected

a bunch of pink daisies for her bonnet, and was only restrained from buying them from the fact that the store was closed, they returned to the Home. They were reprimanded and advised to keep up with the proceedings of the Universal Suffrage Society whose members have risen above hats, so to speak, having time for only the serious problems of life. The next visit of the Indiscretions Committee will be to the Refuge for Pursued Bachelors. The visit was suggested by young Widow McClean who says that the subject of Bachelors is the one that lies nearest her heart I thank you, Mrs. President, ladies, visitors, for your kind attention. (*Seats herself*)

MISS MALONEY. Well, going back to Klein's Millinery Store—as I passed the windy this morning, I saw tin dollar hats for ninety-eight cints.

OMNES. (*A perfect babel*) What, for ninety-eight cents? Ten dollar hats at ninety-eight cents! Are they still there? Klein's do have SUCH bargains! Wonderful styles at Klein's. I need a new hat, etc.

PRESIDENT. (*Pounds with gavel*) Order! Sit down—everybody! (*Babel subsides. Several who had been standing resume their seats*)

MISS MALONEY. No use makin' a raid on Klein's. I didn't mane tin-dollar hats reduced to ninety-eight cints. I meant tin hats, at a dollar apiece, reduced two cints on the hat!

MRS. GADSBY. (*Scornfully*) Oh, that's a different matter, and not worth considering at all!

(OMNES *murmur their agreement with* MRS. GADSBY'S *statement.*)

MRS. GREENE. (*Rises*) Mrs. President.

PRESIDENT. Mrs. Greene?

MRS. GREENE. Please may my little girl speak her piece? The dear darling child is getting so nervous waiting, I'm afraid she'll forget it.

PRESIDENT. Certainly she may speak, Mrs. Greene, but I hope the poem will be strong for suffrage, and not reflect her father's well-known vacillating tendencies.

MISS MALONEY. Sure I was vasciliated last week to keep from getting small-pox but it doesn't affect me tendencies!

PRESIDENT. Order! Susie, you may come forward and recite the poem.

SUSIE. (*Advances and makes deep curtsy*)

Oh, vacant day and lonesome night
When mother goes to vote!
Our baby looks a messy sight
Since mother goes to vote.

The bread falls flat and will not rise
When mother goes to vote.
And father ties his own neckties
Since mother goes to vote.

Our shoes and stockings are all holes
Since mother goes to vote,
We eat stale pie and hard-shell rolls
Since mother goes to vote.

The dog has lost his hopeful bark
Since mother goes to vote,
Pa reads his paper in the Park
Since mother goes to vote.

The cat puts on some extra airs
Since mother goes to vote,
We wish Ma never had woke up
And found that she could vote.

And so the family's all broke up
Because Ma goes to vote,
Pa swears, whene'er it's time to sup,
And calls himself the goat!

(*Makes deep cursty and retires to seat. Only* MRS. WAYBACK *applauds*)

MRS. JONES. Mrs. President, without wishing to criticise little Susie, I will say that my little Jennie is all prepared to read her prize Essay on Men, which is more in the spirit of what the Feminist Club of Punkville stands for, than the verses so nicely delivered by our young friend.

PRESIDENT. We'll be glad to hear from Jennie.

(JENNIE *comes forward and stands in spot left vacant by* SUSIE.)

JENNIE. (*Makes a business-like little bow to* PRESIDENT *and her auditors*) Men are the articles women marry and then are sorry afterwards that they did, except old maids who are sorry that they didn't. Men stay away from church because they are not allowed to wear bonnets in church like women even at Easter, so what's the use? Women are logical and men zoological. That is why a man's wife so often calls him a brute, and he likes to be called a sly dog but if anyone calls him a puppy it's time to send quick for the police. Man sprang from a monkey, and woman did too, only she sprang a longer distance while she was at it, and she has remained ahead ever since. Selah! (*Sits down amid loud applause*)

PRESIDENT. (*Looks at slip on her desk placed there by* MISS LOPPY) Miss Loppy informs me that we have now come to the last number on our programme consisting of a suffrage song by the members of the Pink Cat Club from Loudville, who wish to announce that the Cats may be engaged to appear at Suffrage Bonfires, and so forth.

MRS. VOCAL. (*Springs up*) Bonfires, Mrs. President, sounds as if we were singed cats, whereas we insist upon the adjective pink. (*As*

she pronounces the word "pink" the several members of the Pink Cat Club produce huge pink bows from their reticules, and pin them just below the chin. MRS. VOCAL *advances to space in front of* PRESIDENT'S *desk and wields baton while the others, grouped back of her, sing*)

SONG.

(*Tune of "Old Black Joe."*)

Gone are the days when the vote we did not know,
Now is the time when our horns we freely blow.
We cast our votes just like a voter man
Though some still say we surely can't
We can, can, can!

Gone are the men who said it wouldn't do,
Times now are changed and grumblers are taboo.
Some day we'll have a female President.
Hooray, hooray, we'll hire that day a
Cir-cus tent!

MISS MALONEY. Iverybody sing! (*Jumps on a chair, beats time with a Votes for Women pennant, while* OMNES *join in the singing. The song is repeated throughout while handkerchiefs and flags are waved by the singers, and the utmost enthusiasm shown*)

CURTAIN.

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